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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 09/18/09

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Support rate for Hatoyama cabinet at 75 percent in Yomiuri poll

#### Nikkei:

Government to look into reorganizing public medical insurance system into regional insurance systems, scrapping medical service system for elderly people aged 75 or older

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New administration to reform Japanese systems: Ability to implement policy measures to be put to test

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State strategy office will not be involved in recompilation of supplementary budget adopted during Aso cabinet

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, September 17

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NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

09:31 Met with Japanese Trade Union Confederation President Tsuyoshi Takagi and others at the Kantei. Health, Labor and Welfare Minister Nagatsuma and Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano were also present at the meeting.

12:04 Met deputy chief cabinet secretaries Matsuno and Matsui, and others.

13:08 Met Hirano and Lower House member Ritsuo Hosokawa.

15:44 Met Cabinet Intelligence Director Mitani.

16:15 Met Vice Foreign Minister Yabunaka.

17:00 Held a telephone conversation with Russian President Medvedev.

17:33 Met State Minister for National Strategy Bureau Kan, Finance Minister Fujii, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano, and State Minister for Administrative Reform Council Sengoku. Kan, Fujii, and Sengoku stayed behind.

18:10 Met Sengoku.

20:30 Arrived at his private residence in Denenchofu.

21:06 Dined with his wife at a sushi restaurant in Jiyugaoka.

22:31 Arrived his private residence.

4) Poll: 71 PERCENT support Hatoyama cabinet

ASAHI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
September 18, 2009

The public approval rating for Prime Minister Hatoyama's cabinet reached 71 PERCENT in a telephone-based spot nationwide public opinion survey conducted by the Asahi Shimbun in the wake of the administration's inauguration. The disapproval rating was 14 PERCENT. The Hatoyama cabinet's approval rating upon its debut - though below the inaugural 78 PERCENT rating for the Koizumi cabinet (in April 2001) - ranked second among its predecessors, paralleling the 71 PERCENT rating for the Hosokawa cabinet upon its inauguration (in a face-to-face poll conducted in September 1993) that came into office as a non-Liberal Democratic Party government.

In response to a question in the survey about Japan-U.S. relations, 71 PERCENT of respondents answered that Japan-U.S. relations would "remain unchanged," with 14 PERCENT saying that relations between the two countries would "worsen." Concern over the negative impact of Prime Minister Hatoyama advocating building "an equal relationship between Japan and the United States" does not seem to have spread among the public.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the Democratic Party of Japan stood at 46 PERCENT, with the LDP at 15 PERCENT. The DPJ's support rate hit an all-time high, way above the 39 PERCENT rating in the last survey conducted Aug. 31 and Sept. 1. It topped even the LDP's one-time record high of 43 PERCENT, which was marked in September 2005 when the Koizumi cabinet was in office, and is on a par with the LDP's support rate between the 1980s and the early 1990s when the LDP's single-party government was in office. The LDP's support rate hit its lowest level since its

founding in 1955.

5) Poll: Hatoyama cabinet's support rate at 75 PERCENT

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
September 18, 2009

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In the wake of the Hatoyama cabinet's inauguration, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun and TV Tokyo jointly conducted a spot public opinion survey on Sept. 16-17. In the survey, the public approval rating for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's cabinet reached 75 PERCENT . This rating for the Hatoyama cabinet is the second highest inaugural rating, ranking second to the Koizumi cabinet's 80 PERCENT rating upon its inauguration in April 2001. The disapproval rating was 17 PERCENT . The rate of public support for the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) reached an all-time high of 58 PERCENT . The figure shows the public's high expectations for the DPJ, which has upheld such campaign slogans as "breaking away from the bureaucracy's lead." The Liberal Democratic Party's support rate plummeted from 29 PERCENT in August to 22 PERCENT .

6) Poll: 72 PERCENT support Hatoyama cabinet

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Abridged)  
September 18, 2009

The public approval rating for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and his cabinet, which made its debut on Sept. 16, reached 72.0 PERCENT in a telephone-based spot nationwide public opinion survey conducted by Kyodo News on Sept. 16-17, the third highest inaugural rating next to the Koizumi and Hosokawa cabinets since the Miyazawa cabinet. Meanwhile, the rate of public support for the Democratic Party of Japan also rose 6.5 points from the last poll and hit an all-time high of 47.6 PERCENT . The disapproval rating was 13.1 PERCENT .

7) Poll: 77 PERCENT support Hatoyama cabinet

MAINICHI (Top play) (Abridged)  
September 18, 2009

The Mainichi Shimbun conducted a spot nationwide public opinion survey on Sept. 16-17 in the wake of the Hatoyama cabinet's inauguration. The Hatoyama cabinet's support rate was 77 PERCENT upon its debut. Its inaugural rating is the second highest, ranking next to the Koizumi cabinet's 85 PERCENT rating in April 2001. It topped even the 75 PERCENT rating for the Hosokawa cabinet in August 1993, which came into office as a non-Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government. The rate of public support for the now-ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) also hit an all-time high of 45 PERCENT , up 6 points from the last survey conducted Aug. 26-27 before the Aug. 30 general election for the House of Representatives. Meanwhile, the LDP dropped to an all-time low of 12 PERCENT , down 8 points from the last survey.

8) Poll: 75 PERCENT support Hatoyama cabinet

YOMIURI (Top play) (Abridged)  
September 18, 2009

Following the Hatoyama cabinet's inauguration, the Yomiuri Shimbun conducted a telephone-based spot public opinion survey across the nation from the evening of Sept. 16 through Sept. 17. The new cabinet's support rate reached 75 PERCENT , with its nonsupport rate at 17 PERCENT . This rating for the Hatoyama cabinet is the second highest inaugural rating (since the Ohira cabinet that came into office in 1978), ranking second to the 87 PERCENT for the Koizumi cabinet. Among reasons given for supporting the Hatoyama cabinet, "something can be expected of its policy measures" accounted for 29

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PERCENT , "because it's a non-Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government" at 25 PERCENT , and "it's going to make policy decisions

under its political initiative" at 24 PERCENT . The public's expectations for a switchover from the LDP's politics seem to have led to the high approval rating.

The public's expectations for change appeared in the popularity ratings for political parties as well. The now-ruling Democratic Party of Japan scored an all-time high of 51 PERCENT , up 4 points from 47 PERCENT in the last survey conducted from Aug. 31 through Sept. 1, right after the Aug. 30 general election for the House of Representatives. Support for the LDP fell from 24 PERCENT in the last survey to 19 PERCENT .

9) Prime Minister Hatoyama eager for progress in Northern Territories issue

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

Yesterday Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama held with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev a telephone conversation in which the two leaders agreed to hold their first meeting when they visit the United States to attend the United Nations General Assembly in late September and other international conferences. Responding to questions by reporters, Hatoyama said, "It is impossible to realize progress in the territorial issues in the absence of a relationship of trust (between us)," expressing his willingness to build a relationship of mutual trust with the Russian leader to achieve early progress on the territorial issue.

Medvedev telephoned Hatoyama. It was Hatoyama's first teleconference with a top foreign leader since he took office.

10) Advisor to U.S. Ambassador to Japan delivers speech: Urges development of friendly working relationship with U.S.

ASAHI (Page 11) (Excerpts)  
September 18, 2009

Daniel Okimoto, professor emeritus at Stanford University, who is known as an advisor to U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos on Japan policy, on September 17 gave a speech in Tokyo. Referring to the launch of the new Hatoyama administration, the professor stressed the importance of the alliance relationship between Japan and the U.S. He then urged Prime Minister Hatoyama to build a personal relationship of trust with the U.S. leader, saying, "President Obama has an enormous influence on the world. It is essential for the prime minister to build a friendly working relationship with him."

Okimoto delivered the speech at a lecture meeting titled, "The Obama administration and Japan-U.S. relations," hosted by the Asahi Shimbun. In his speech, he pointed out that while the power of the U.S. has been weakened because of the financial crisis last year, new powers such as China and India have emerged. He then stressed the need for Japan and the U.S., which share common problems such as massive fiscal deficits and high unemployment rates, to cooperate.

Okimoto also pointed out that it is important for the two countries to continue to cooperate on such issues as measures to curb global warming and stabilize the financial system. Concerning such fields as medical services, health care areas, and clean technology, the

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professor said that this a good opportunity for Japan and the U.S. to create a constructive relationship.

11) Defense minister to hear Okinawa governor's views on Futenma relocation

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa revealed at a press conference yesterday afternoon that he intends to visit Okinawa in late September to hear the views of the Okinawa governor and other officials on the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (Ginowan City).

12) Defense Minister Kitazawa: Relocating Futenma Air Station outside Okinawa will be difficult

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

In a press conference yesterday, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said: "It will be considerably difficult to transfer the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa outside the prefecture or outside the nation." The Democratic Party of Japan proposed relocating the Futenma facility outside Okinawa in its report, "Okinawa vision," released in 2008. He then revealed his plan to visit Okinawa possibly later this month to hear the views of concerned local residents and communities.

Kitazawa also indicated his intention of continuing the government's environmental impact assessment of the candidate construction site for the Futenma replacement facility. Regarding the expenses included in the Defense Ministry's fiscal 2010 budget request for transferring U.S. Marines in Okinawa to Guam, as well, Kitazawa took a negative view about the proposed freezing of the current U.S. forces realignment plan. He said, "Considering the importance of continuity in foreign policy and of the Japan-U.S. security alliance, as well as the need to run the administration in a practical way, I would like to discuss the issue with other relevant cabinet ministers." Furthermore, he indicated his intention to have Maritime Self-Defense Force troops' activities continue to combat pirates in waters off Somalia for the time being, saying: "The international community has evaluated the activities highly, so I would like to watch the situation for a while."

13) Okada indicates hopes of reaching conclusion by year's end on Futenma issue, discussing with U.S. "no-first-use of nuclear weapons"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)  
September 19, 2009

In an interview with the media, including the Sankei Shimbun, yesterday, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada indicated his hope of reaching a conclusion on whether or not to review the plan agreed on between Japan and the U.S. on realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, including the planned transfer of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa. He said: "Once the environmental impact assessment is completed, it will become necessary to create a budget for the plan. This means that the government should make a decision by the end of the year."

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Okada also indicated that the government would start discussing a redefinition of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements if Futenma and other issues outstanding between Japan and the U.S. are settled. He said: "This idea is based on the assumption that various issues are resolved. I hope that (Japan and the U.S.) will be able to set a certain direction to establish a relationship of trust." Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

On whether to call on the U.S. to adopt a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons, Okada made this comment:

"The idea of launching a preemptive attack with inhumane weapons is beyond my comprehension. It is also beyond my understanding that the same person (who condones this idea) is calling for abolishing nuclear weapons and arms reduction. I would like to listen to the opinions of the administrative officials concerned and discuss the issue with them."

14) Pentagon plans to shorten the Futenma replacement runways by 380 meters

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

Satoshi Ogawa, Washington

It has become clear that the U.S. Department of Defense has begun coordination to shorten the length of the runways of a facility replacing the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station, to be built on Camp Schwab in Nago, by 380 meters from 1,600 meters to 1,220 meters. The overall length of the replacement facility will be unchanged at 1,800 meters. Although the U.S. government has consistently denied the possibility of reviewing the U.S. force realignment roadmap, agreed upon between Tokyo and Washington 2006, this will effectively be a change to the plan. The step is also likely to impact talks with the Hatoyama administration, which is seeking a reexamination of the relocation plan.

U.S. Pacific Command Commander Admiral Timothy Keating delivered a speech in Washington on Sept. 15 in which he indicated that the replacement facility runways will be 4,000 feet (1,220 meters) long. The step is in response to a call for flight safety by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, adopted by the U.S. House of Representatives.

15) U.S. defense secretary to visit Japan on Oct. 20

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

It has been decided that U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates will visit Japan on Oct. 20-21. He will hold talks for the first time with Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa to discuss such pending bilateral security issues as the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. Coordination is also underway for Gates to meet with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada.

16) Okada eyes redefinition of Japan-U.S. alliance by Upper House election next summer

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said yesterday that the government would consider redefining the Japan-U.S. alliance before the House of Councillors election next summer in order to establish equal Japan-U.S. relations. His party - the Democratic Party of Japan - called for an equal partnership in its manifesto for the latest House of Representatives election.

In an interview with the media, including the Tokyo Shimbun, Okada cited the following four issues as those that should be tackled during the first 100 days after the launch of the new government: (1) Alleged secret pacts between Japan and the U.S. on the handling of nuclear weapons and the return of Okinawa to Japan; (2) the planned transfer of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa; (3) alternative assistance for Afghanistan and Pakistan to the ongoing Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean; and (4) global warming.

Okada then said regarding the proposed redefinition of the Japan-U.S. alliance: "It is conceivable that the government will redefine the Japan-U.S. alliance in the 300 days between now and the Upper House election on the assumption that various issues will be smoothly resolved."

He also expressed his hope to reach a conclusion by the end of this year on whether or not to relocate Futenma Air Station.

17) Defense minister does not approve of exercise of right to collective self-defense

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)  
September 18, 2009

The government's council to discuss security and defense capability is calling on the government to enable the exercise of the right to collective self-defense. Touching on this request, Defense Minister

Toshimi Kitazawa at a press conference on September 17 stressed his stance of not approving of the exercise of the right, saying, "Domestic views are generally in agreement with the policy of not exercising this right. It is not productive to expend energy on this issue." Also referring to the panel's proposal for reviewing the nation's exclusively defense-oriented policy, Kitazawa said, "It is not necessary to review this policy."

18) Defense minister says, "Appraisal of Japan's refueling operation is low"

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)  
September 9, 2009

The Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling operations in the Indian Ocean will expire in January next year. Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa at a press conference on September 17 categorically said that once the deadlines passes, there will be no extension, because appraisal of the refueling operation has been low. Speaking of the dispatch of Self-Defense Forces personnel to Afghanistan, he noted, "The current situation in that nation appears to be very dangerous. It would be fairly difficult to dispatch personnel for humanitarian purposes. We have to be careful."

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19) Defense minister determined not to extend the refueling mission and to "look squarely at reality" regarding Futenma

MAINICHI (Top play) (Excerpts)  
Evening, September 17, 2009

After midnight Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa held his inaugural news conference in which he indicated that in accordance with his party's basic thinking, he will not extend the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law authorizing the Maritime Self-Defense Force's (MSDF) refueling mission in the Indian Ocean. The law will expire next January. Kitazawa announced a plan to withdraw the MSDF without extending the law authorizing the refueling mission. The new defense minister also indicated that the government will consider new support measures for Afghanistan. "It is not a subject for (the Defense Ministry) to deal with independently," he said. "The government will thoroughly discuss it."

He also suggested that he will not necessarily adhere to a plan to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station outside Okinawa or Japan. "I want to discuss measures by looking squarely at reality," he commented. He further expressed a plan to visit Okinawa soon to exchange views with Governor Hirokazu Nakaima and others.

20) U.S. to accept termination of MSDF refueling mission on condition of enhanced assistance for Afghanistan

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Abridged slightly)  
Evening, September 17, 2009

Yoso Furumoto, Washington

The U.S. government decided on Sept. 16 that if the Hatoyama administration formally decides to terminate the Maritime Self-Defense Force's (MSDF) refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, it will accept the decision on the condition of Japan's enhanced assistance for Afghanistan, according to a U.S. government source.

There were strong expectations for the continuation of the MSDF's refueling services for the multinational forces interdicting terrorist activities in the Indian Ocean. Department of Defense spokesman Geoff Morrell has said that the United States and the world have greatly benefitted from the MSDF mission.

Nevertheless, Yukio Hatoyama made clear before becoming prime minister that his administration will not extend the law authorizing the MSDF mission beyond its expiry next January. Further, the Democratic Party of Japan, the Social Democratic Party, and the People's New Party, the ruling parties, have also confirmed their policy to terminate the refueling mission. These indications have



led the U.S. government to conclude that the MSDF pullout is inevitable. Washington has also decided to avoid taking any steps that might sour its relations with Tokyo over the matter.

Support for Afghanistan is a top priority for the U.S. government. U.S. military authorities are considering sending additional troops to that country. The U.S. government is concerned about the possible impact of the decision by its ally Japan on the international community.

"Simply pulling out (the MSDF) is tantamount to the abandonment of its international responsibility," a U.S. government source said. If

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Japan decides to end its refueling mission, the U.S. government intends to ask Japan to come up with a new form of assistance for Afghanistan.

21) METI minister eager to achieve 25 percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Excerpt)  
September 18, 2009

Economy Trade and Industry Minister (METI) Masayuki Naoshima in an inaugural press conference held early on the morning of September 17 said, "There could be a rise in costs. I must have our policy understood in order to strike a balance between environmental (measures) and the economy." He thus indicated a desire to achieve the Democratic Party of Japan's goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020, compared with the 1990 level."

ROOS